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AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

Volume 30 San Francisco, California, January, 1948 Number 1

December Field Trip

The twenty-eighth annual census of water birds at Lake Merritt, Oakland, was taken on Sunday, December 14th. The following is the result of our morning's walk around the lake. Twenty-six species of water birds were counted.

Eared Grebe, 53
Western Grebe, 3
Pied-billed Grebe, 20
Double-crested Cormorant, 4
Great Blue Heron, 1
Common Egret, 8
Snowy Egret, 3
Black- crowned Night Heron, 86
Canada Goose, 2
White-fronted Goose, 2
Snow Goose, 3
Mallard, 203
Pintail, 858
Baldpate, 478
Redhead Duck, 1
Canvas-back, 194
Scaup, 10
Common Golden-eye, 25
Ruddy Duck, 32
American Coot, 818
Killdeer, 1
Glaucous-winged Gull, 102
Herring Gull, 1
California Gull, 44
Ring-billed Gull, 65
Bonaparte Gull, 216

Pinioned birds not included in the above: Canada Goose, 2; Cackling Goose, 2; White-fronted Goose, 2; Snow Goose, 2; Ross Goose, 1; Wood Duck, 1; Redhead Duck, 1.

Twenty-seven species of land birds were seen:

Red-tailed Hawk
Sharp-shinned Hawk
California Quail
Anna Hummingbird
Black Phoebe
California Jay
Bush-tit
Plain Titmouse
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Wren-tit
Mockingbird
Robin
Cedar Waxwing
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Audubon Warbler
English Sparrow
Brewer Blackbird
House Finch
Purple Finch
Pine Siskin
Arkansas Goldfinch
Brown Towhee
Junco
White-crowned Sparrow
Golden-crowned Sparrow
Fox Sparrow
Song Sparrow

Thirty members and guests were present.

— Donald Brock, *Leader and Historian.*

Solano County Nuthatches

At noon on September 2, 1947 while I was watering the fern garden at my home in Benicia, a Red-breasted Nuthatch dropped out of the pepper tree overhead. It was attracted by the stream of water flowing from the hose, as birds often are. The Nuthatch took several swallows of water from the wet leaves on the ground, and after further investigating the flow of water, flew to a hawthorne tree from which I heard its call notes. From there it flew to a small incense cedar and allowed me to approach and extend my hand to within a foot of it before it again flew.

The Slender-billed Nuthatch is resident and nests commonly here, but this is my first record of the Red-breasted Nuthatch in my county.

— Emerson A. Stoner, *Benicia, Calif.*

An Unusual Observation

On November 29, 1947, about a dozen sandpipers, (probably Least and Western) were observed at Bay Farm Island where they were apparently stuck in the mud. About half of the birds were dead and lying on the mud. Those that were alive were standing, apparently resigned to their fate, as their feet seemed to be held fast by the substrate or possibly by clams or some other organism in the mud. The observers, Mrs. Vee Curtis, Mrs. Myra Brown and Miss Florence Plymell were unable to approach closer than 15 feet, so were unable to determine what was responsible for the sandpipers' plight.

Notes

New Member. We wish to welcome Miss Jacqueline Watkins, who joined the group last month.

1948 *Dues*: The annual dues for the year 1948 are now payable, and all members are asked to make their remittances as early as possible to the treasurer, Miss Ivander MacIver. Membership, now $3.50; Joint membership for married couples, $5.00; Student membership, $1.50; Subscription (without membership) $1.00.

Tawny Pipit. The English motion-picture, "Tawny Pipit" is currently being shown at some of the local theaters. This charming picture, which has as its stars a pair of Tawny Pipits that came to nest in Lipsbury Lea, is highly recommended to all bird enthusiasts. Incidentally, the Tawny Pipit, a rare visitor in England, was recently observed at Somerset. (British Birds, Vol. XL, No. 11, pp. 343-344, Nov. 1947) Perhaps this bird, observed on May 4, 1947, is the one that inspired the story.

In Memoriam. It is with sorrow that we note that Mrs. C. E. Pitcher passed away on October 17, 1946. Mrs. Pitcher was the eighth life member of the Audubon Association of the Pacific, being elected to membership on April 8, 1920.

Observations

Edited by JUNEA W. KELLY

Three groups of Red Crossbills: 6 seen at 237 Taurus Avenue, Oakland; 6 at 5833 Merriewood Drive, Oakland; and 7 at the corner of Oval Road and Pinewood Drive, Nov. 23, 1947, Mr. Donald A. Brock.

Red Crossbills, call notes heard, Nov. 30 and Dec. 2, 1947, near the Boy Scout Camp, at end of Park Boulevard, Oakland, Mr. Brighton C. Cain.

Pair of White-tailed Kites, one of which was observed chasing a Red-tailed Hawk, Nov. 11, 1947, near Suisun Bay, Mr. Laurance A. Curl.

2 Red Crossbills, Nov. 8; 5 or 6 Red Crosssbills, Nov. 11, 1947; 9 Red Crossbills, Nov. 13, 1947, unbanded White-throated Sparrow, Dec. 15, 1947, 11000 Broadway Terrace, Oakland, Mrs. Vee Curtis.

Red Crossbills, about 60, Nov. 30, 1947, near La Salle Street, Oakland, Mrs. Junea W. Kelly.

Female Red Crossbill, trapped in fresh oil on road, Nov. 8, 1947, Pan-Toll, near Summit Meadows, Tamalpais Park, Marin Co., Calif., Mr. E. T. Kilham.

2 Golden Eagles, Nov. 8, 1947, near Mt. Hamilton, Mr. H. V. Leffler

California Jays, seen repeatedly, Oct. 12 to Dec. 21, 1947, Laurel Hill Cemetery, Mr. Arthur H. Myer.

3 White Pelicans, Nov. 17, 1947, Oakland, Amy Rinehart.

Mockingbird, Nov. 1, Berkeley, Miss Minnie H. Young.

The Distribution of North American Birds

"For many years the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (formerly in part the Biological Survey) has been accumulating information on the distribution, migration, and abundance of North American birds. By means of this information the Service is aided in administering intelligently the bird resources of the United States, as it is obligated to do under the terms of the migratory bird treaties with Canada and Mexico. The method of getting this information has been to furnish 2 x 5 inch cards to bird students in various parts of the country. On these the observer would record the migration dates, breeding and wintering status and abundance of each species of bird occurring at his locality. Thse cards are distributed by species and State or Province in a file which contains also transcribed and clipped published records of distribution and migration. This file, now containing over 2,000,000 cards, besides its use in many government publications, has served as the basis of bird distribution

descriptions in many State bird books, as well as in the several editions of the American Ornithologists' Union *Check-List of North American Birds*. It is at present being used as a basis for the next revised edition of the A. O. U. Check-List, as well as the ranges to be included in the forthcoming volumes of Bent's *Life Histories of North American Birds*."

The paragraph above is taken from a letter written to Dr. Reynolds by John W. Aldrich, of the Divison of Wildlife Research, in which the Audubon Association of the Pacific is invited to participate in this project. It is hoped that our organization may take an active part in compiling species data for this purpose.

January Meeting

The 364th meeting of the Audubon Association of the Pacific will be held on January 8, 1948. Meet in the Assembly Room of the San Francisco Public Library at Larkin and McAllister Streets at 8:00 p. m. Mr. C. A. Harwell, naturalist and lecturer for the National Audubon Society will be the speaker of the evening. Topic to be announced later.

January Field Trip

The January Field Trip will be taken to the Berkeley Campus of the University of California on January 11, 1948. S. F. members and friends take the "F" train at the Key System Terminal at 9:07 a. m. East Bay residents take street cars #4, 5, 7 or bus #6 and get off at University and Shattuck Avenues. Walk up University Avenue and meet at 9:45 a. m. at the west entrance to the campus (at Oxford & University). An extra trip will be taken up Strawberry Canyon from the campus.

As has been their custom in other years, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Myer have kindly invited the group to have coffee at 1 p. m. at their home at 25 El Camino Real, Berkeley. Bring luncheon and binoculars. Mrs. Ethel Richardson will lead the trip.

Audubon Association of the Pacific

Organized January 25, 1917

For the Study and the Protection of Birds

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Monthly meetings second Thursday, 8:00 p. m.
Assembly Room, San Francisco Public Library, Larkin and McAllister Sts., San Francisco

Membership dues, payable January 1st, $3.50 per year
Student memberships, $1.50 per year Life memberships, $50.00
Subscription, $1.00 per year